

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00

DLOS-06 OES-06 TRSE-00 /042 W

-----211314Z 023039 /41

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FM AMCONSUL OPORTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 943

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, PO

SUBJECT: PORT CONGESTION SURCHARGE AT LEIXOES

REF STATE 48573

1. THREE FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO CONTINUAL CONGESTION
AT LEIXOES:

-- BAD WEATHER. HEAVY RAINS AND WIND HAVE PREDOMINATED IN
1977 TO DATE.

-- LACK OF FACILITIES. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, LEIXOES IS
IN THROES OF EXPANSION. LEIXOES PRESENTLY LACKS SUFFICIENT
UNLOADING EQUIPMENT, PIER SPACE AND CARGO STORAGE FACILITIES.
CONTAINER TERMINAL UNDER CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BE OPERATIONAL
BY DECEMBER, 1977 BUT LOCATION IS NOT FAVORABLE AND WILL
BE UNPROTECTED FROM NW/SW GALES.

-- LABOR PROBLEMS. OPORTO SHIPPERS CONSIDER LOCAL LABOR
TO BE SUPERIOR TO THAT IN LISBON AREA WHERE TURNOVER TIME
IN PORT CAN BE TWICE AS HIGH AS LEIXOES. HOWEVER, THERE
HAVE BEEN SEVERAL RECENT STRIKES IN LEIXOES AND HIGH
LABOR COSTS LIMIT WEEKDAY OVERTIME AND PRACTICALLY PROHIBIT
WEEKEND WORK.

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2. AT NO TIME TO DATE IN 1977 HAS LEIXOES BEEN FREE OF
CONGESTION. IT IS RARE THAT SHIPS ENTER THE PORT IMMEDIATELY
ON ARRIVAL. AVERAGE NUMBER OF VESSELS ANCHORED OFFSHORE
AND AWAITING ENTRANCE OVER PAST WEEK WAS EIGHT ACCORDING
TO VISUAL OBSERVATION. CONGESTION VARIES GREATLY DEPENDING
ON TYPE OF VESSEL AND CARGO. RECORD-KEEPING ALSO COMPLICATED

BY FACT THAT SOME SHIPS REQUEST LEIXOES DOCK SPACE THEN MAKE
RUN TO LISBON BEFORE ENTERING.

GENERAL CARGO SHIPS ARE LEAST EFFECTED BY WEATHER AND LACK
OF FACILITIES. CURRENT RECORD IS CONSIDERED "FAIR" BY AGENTS
WITH DELAYS FROM 1-4 DAYS.

BULK CARRIERS SUFFER GREATER DELAYS BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT
EQUIPMENT.

CONTAINER VESSELS AND TANKERS FARE THE WORST. APPROXIMATELY
90 PER CENT OF OCEAN TRAFFIC BETWEEN LEIXOES AND U.S.
PORTS IS HANDLED BY CONTAINERS. ONE TANKER RECENTLY WAITED
ONE MONTH DURING EXTENDED PERIOD OF INCLEMENT WEATHER TO
DISCHARGE CRUDE OIL CARGO.

3. LOCAL OPINION IS DIVIDED OVER QUESTION WHETHER CONGESTION
SURCHARGE IS WARRANTED. PORT AUTHORITIES BELIEVE SURCHARGE
IS BEING USED AS ONLY ANOTHER WAY TO RAISE RATES AND
TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED WITH EXPECTED ONSET OF FAIR WEATHER.
OPORTO SHIPPING AGENTS ARE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT SURCHARGE
IS NECESSARY ALTHOUGH SEVERAL THINK SURCHARGE SHOULD BE
LOWERED TO 5-10 PER CENT IN ANTICIPATION OF BETTER CONDITIONS.
POST CONCLUDES SOME SURCHARGE IS JUSTIFIED. HAS FEDERAL
MARITIME COMMISSION EVER CONSIDERED HAVING SURCHARGE APPLIED ONLY IN
C
IN CASES OF EXTENDED DELAY SUCH AS MORE THAN 24 HOURS?
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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 14-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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